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Commission on the Status of Women
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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world

Statement submitted by Legião da Boa Vontade, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

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The Legion of Good Will (Legião da Boa Vontade), an NGO in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), brings to the attention of the Commission on Status of Women, the relevant work of the NGO(s) who have been cooperating with the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, emphasis to the *"Education and training of Women", considered as a human right issue, essential for the goals of equality, development and Peace.*

* E/CN.6/2002/1.

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In its permanent campaign against hunger and for the valuation of women and their eternal spirits, the Legion of Good Will promotes Charity as an essential tool for the transformation of life on our planet. As the President of the Organization, Mr. Jose de Paiva Netto declared: "Charity should be the inspiring light of peoples' Governments. Charity is the most powerful equipment for Peace, when it is also understood as Fraternity and Solidarity (...)". Very apropos a recent editorial in "The New York Times" entitled "Health Aid for Poor Countries" attests a sensitive awareness to eradicate poverty in the World. It says: "...The Commission on Macroeconomics and Health, led by Prof. Jeffrey Sachs of Harvard, asks rich countries to spend an extra one-tenth of 1 percent of their economies on the health of the poor. In Washington's case, this would mean doubling current health aid, an extra $10 billion a year. If all wealthy countries cooperated, it would add $38 billion a year to health spending by 2015. The commission argues that if that money went to poor nations that also spent more and improved their health care systems, these countries would see at least $360 billion a year in economic gains, lifting millions of people out of poverty. And not incidentally, eight million lives a year would be saved."

Still back in the eighties, Paiva Netto wrote " we know that two percent of the world's production would put an end to poverty on our Planet. This is what Dr. Mario Altenfelder, a Brazilian expert in this field, revealed. And why this does not happen? Because many peoples' heart are still cold. Economics has been too distant from God, forgetting that citizens are the Divine Capital, for human life is the supreme Asset. Solidarity has expanded from the shining field of ethics to become a strategy for Men and Women to ensure their survival. To the globalization of impoverishment we counterpose the globalization of Love as a powerful instrument of reaction to the pseudofatalism of poverty (...), for this is the most important globalization of all. Thousands of years have passed but Virgil is still updated when he warns in the famous Aeneid: "Hunger is a bad adviser". Based on that warning, decades ago I launched to the awareness of nations the proposition of a new kind of economical doctrine: the Economics of Human Solidarity, within the Strategy of Survival".

Having children and women's education as a core issue to eradicate illiteracy, poverty and violence in the world, the Legion has disseminated United Nations information through media, press releases, organizing interviews and workshops throughout Latin America and USA, empowering women in her life cycle in a globalizing world. The Legion of Good Will's international, educational and social programs have improved the lives of multitudes of people in need, through its 552 welfare centers in the world, composed by Day-Care Centers, homes for Elderly People, community centers, Mother&Child health care program and since 1962, the traditional Midnight Charity Round – Mobile Soup Kitchen for those who live in the streets. Again quoting the President of the Organization Mr. Paiva Netto: "The Legion constitutes an example of the difference Love can make in people's lives. And all we had when its work started was merely Love - The word that sums up all the meaning of pedagogy. Nothing else...

We finish this statement affirming that there will be a majestic time when all people will accept but one dogma, that of fraternity without borders. Some day, all this will be shared by all terrestrial Beings, weary of hatred and intolerant separations. God is the Light of the World".